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PROGRAM Good Morning America

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SUBJECT CIA Report: The Palestinian Question

JACK ANDERSON: Last night President Reagan denied press reports that he'd like to see Menachem Begin removed as Prime Minister of Israel. Nevertheless, my sources tell me the National Security Council has been secretly discussing ways and means of getting rid of Begin. So far, they haven't come up with a workable plan.

Now, I can report that an arms cutoff has been ruled out. The reason for this is purely practical. The Israelis don't need American arms right now. Their invasion of Lebanon didn't cost them much equipment. In fact, they wound up with an enormous amount of captured military booty.

But the President's advisers have been discussing some less drastic reprisals against Israel. Reagan's angry at the Begin government, I'm told, not only for allowing Palestinian refugees to be massacred, but also for brusquely rejecting his peace plan for the Middle East.

Here are some of the reprisals that have been mentioned at the White House. One proposal, the United States could stop forgiving Israeli arms debts. Usually, about \$500 million are written off each year. Another possibility, organizations that donate money to Israel could be stripped of their tax-exempt status. Now, this would put a serious crimp in Israel's fund-raising efforts in this country. Or the Administration could tighten up the rules on Americans who lobby for Israel. Most of them are not required to register as foreign agents. But Americans who lobby for Arab causes are compelled to register.

Oh, finally, the White House could decide to deduct the money Israel spends on its West Bank settlements from the billion

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dollars a year in U.S. economic aid. This might cause the Israelis to wonder whether the West Bank colonies are really worth the cost.

Let me close with an excerpt from a top secret CIA report: "The Palestinian question raises so many sensitive issues, that most Israelis would prefer not to face it." What Reagan wants, in the words of the top secret document, is to force Israel to come to grips with the question.